

In the Claims

Claims 1 to 25 are pending in the application.

Claims 1 to 25 are rejected.

Explanation of Amendments in the Claims:

1. (cancelled)
2. (cancelled)
3. (cancelled)
4. (cancelled)
5. (cancelled)
6. (cancelled)
7. (cancelled)
8. (cancelled)
9. (cancelled)
10. (cancelled)
11. (cancelled)
12. (cancelled)
13. (cancelled)
14. (cancelled)
15. (cancelled)
16. (cancelled)
17. (cancelled)
18. (cancelled)
19. (cancelled)
20. (cancelled)
21. (cancelled)
22. (cancelled)
23. (cancelled)
24. (cancelled)
25. (cancelled)

26. (new) A method of lifting an object having a substantially flat bottom supported on particulate material on the ground, the method comprising:

providing at least one lifting device comprising an elongate shaft member, a hook member supported on a first end of the shaft member transversely to a longitudinal direction of the shaft member, and a gripping member supported on the shaft member adjacent a second end thereof;

positioning the hook member of said at least one lifting device adjacent and parallel to a respective side edge of the object;

lowering the hook member of said at least one lifting device along the respective side edge below a respective bottom edge of the object;

rotating the hook member of said at least one lifting device about a longitudinal axis of the shaft member until the hook member is positioned below the object; and

lifting said at least one lifting device.

27. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including forming the hook member to extend substantially straight along a hook axis lying substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal direction of the shaft member.

28. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including providing a plurality of lifting devices and positioning the lifting devices along opposing side edges of the object.

29. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including providing a plurality of lifting devices and positioning the lifting devices at spaced positions along at least one side edge of the object.

30. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including providing a plurality of lifting devices and positioning two of the lifting devices at spaced positions along two opposing side edges of the object.

31. (new) The method according to Claim 26 for an object comprising a first sidewalk slab which is positioned adjacent a second sidewalk slab of similar

configuration, the method including inserting the hook member of said at least one lifting device in a gap defined between the first and second sidewalk slabs before rotating the hook member below the first sidewalk slab.

32. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including forming the hook member to comprise only a flat hook which is straight along the hook axis.

33. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including forming the hook member to be wholly straight along a hook axis lying substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal direction of the shaft member.

34. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including forming the hook member to be flat surfaced and wholly extending substantially straight along a hook axis between the shaft member and a tip of the hook member.

35. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including integrally forming the shaft member and the hook member of a single rod of material which has been deformed.

36. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including forming the shaft member to be circular in cross section at the first end thereof.

37. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including forming the shaft member to be approximately two feet in length.

38. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including providing the shaft member and the hook member with a similar cross sectional dimension which is substantially less than 1/2 inch.

39. (new) The method according to Claim 26 including forming the gripping member to comprise a handle mounted on the shaft member transversely to the longitudinal direction of the shaft member and the hook axis.

40. (new) The method according to Claim 39 including fixing the handle in orientation relative to the shaft member and the hook member.

41. (new) The method according to Claim 39 including injection molding

the handle about the second end of the shaft member.

42. (new) The method according to Claim 41 including deforming the second end of the shaft member prior to injection molding the handle thereabout.

43. (new) A method of lifting an object having a substantially flat bottom supported on particulate material on the ground, the method comprising:

providing at least one lifting device comprising an elongate shaft member, a hook member supported on a first end of the shaft member transversely to a longitudinal direction of the shaft member, and a gripping member supported on the shaft member adjacent a second end thereof;

forming the shaft member and the hook member integrally with one another of a single rod of material which has been deformed, which has a cross sectional dimension which is substantially less than a 1/2 inch, and which is generally circular in cross section at the first end of the shaft member;

forming the hook member to comprise only a flat surfaced hook wholly extending substantially straight along a hook axis lying substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal direction of the shaft member between the shaft member and a tip of the hook member;

positioning the hook member of said at least one lifting device adjacent and parallel to a respective side edge of the object;

lowering the hook member of said at least one lifting device along the respective side edge below a respective bottom edge of the object;

rotating the hook member of said at least one lifting device about a longitudinal axis of the shaft member until the hook member is positioned below the object; and

lifting said at least one lifting device.

44. (new) A method of lifting an object having a substantially flat bottom supported on particulate material on the ground, the method comprising:

providing a plurality of lifting devices, each comprising an elongate shaft member, a hook member supported on a first end of the shaft member transversely to a longitudinal direction of the shaft member, and a gripping member supported on the shaft member adjacent a second end thereof;

positioning two lifting devices at spaced positions along two opposing side edges of the object;

positioning the hook member of each lifting device adjacent and parallel to the respective side edge of the object;

lowering the hook member of each lifting device along the respective side edge below a bottom edge of the object;

rotating the hook member of each lifting device about a longitudinal axis of the respective shaft member until the hook member is positioned below the object; and

lifting the lifting devices to lift the object off of the particulate material.